"That mos' beautiful English word! Then comes Madame Challoner to represent Les Convenences — what you call Mrs. Grundy." He bowed politely to the reverend lady's representative. "'Whom do they know, my friend?' I cry. 'It is importance that I shall know them at once. Whom do they know, whom, too, I know?' 'Ah,' say Grosgean, 'there is le Député Lepine, and there is the de Mailles of St. Germain, and there is also the Monsieur Loomis, who is devote to the beautiful Madame Challoner, with the hair of snow.'"

Mrs. Challoner started and turned scarlet. Mr. Loomis laughed, and sought her hand under cover of the table. Déjol continued his narrative, which he now addressed exclusively to Yolande.

"'Ha!' say I, 'Monsieur Benjamin Loomis — good! excellent! My friend, you have save me! He shall present me to this wonderful Mademoiselle, who has with one glance captured my heart forever.'— I go to him — I demand. Here I am!"

It was Yolande, who now started and colored, but she did not seem displeased. Her eyes flashed to the speaker's tense, earnest face, and their message was at least one of interest.

"You will permit, therefore, that I pay my, what you call 'addresses' to the young lady, chere Madame? Doubtless my good friend here has told you that I am ver' well feexed — yes, even as your fortunes in America are counted. My father was a chemist, one of the first inventors of France. I, too, am an inventor. I am already *décoré*," he proudly thumbed a little scarlet button in the lapel of his coat. "My people are honorable people, and I am myself, 'pas mal' — 'some boy,' as you would say in your idiom. Mademoiselle, you will pardon my speaking so — how is it you say — 'off the bat?' But I cannot help myself." He smiled again his magnetic smile.

"M. DÉJOL is all he says he is," Mr. Loomis endorsed, "and that's going some, as you may have noticed. And now, my good Jeanne, that you have got your proposal off your heart before the soup goes by it, let's have dinner."

With any other quartette such a beginning would have spelled a restraint. But not so with Déjol. To Mrs. Challoner, the openness of the attack was a reassuring novelty. Yolande for a moment was somewhat overpowered, but as her extraordinary cavalier did not again refer to his intentions, and devoted himself to the task of being entertaining, she regained her composure and found herself drawn to him by the sheer vigor and charm of his personality. Déjol talked wittily, his odd use of slang phrases, laboriously acquired, was amusing, and his total lack of vanity left him free to laugh at himself with unaffected heartiness. Dinner over, he summarily took charge of the party.

"My automobile is waiting," he announced. "It is now my evening. We will run out to Enghein. We will see the fireworks and look at the fools who play baccarat — *bon!*"

The car was a huge Pullman affair, lavish in every detail — two men on the box, robes of costly furs, fittings of "vermeil" and upholsterings of old brocade. They sped on cushioned springs, swaying gently where other vehicles tipped and jolted.

Bending devotedly toward the beautiful American, he continued his intimate chat. What did she like? Travel or chateau life? What was her favorite color, and what the flower she preferred? And did she like dogs — what kind of dogs? Was she fond of athletics? And did she like to sit up late?

Mrs. Challoner would have broken up the tete-a-tete, but Cupid had a powerful ally in the big man with the snapping black eyes and the rumbling voice. If, as the astute chief of police had stated, he was "devote to Mme. Challoner" he was certainly doing everything in his power to live up to the reputation.

The quartette was never separated, yet it resolved itself into two duets, whether they sat sipping champagne on the terraces overlooking the little lake of Enghein, or stood behind the tense groups of gamesters at the tables. On the return journey they were all somewhat silent, a trifle weary.

The indomitable Déjol had very quietly possessed himself of Yolande's hand. She struggled a moment, and then relaxed her fingers to his palm. There was nothing forward even about that forward action; it was as earnest and open as his handsome face and kind eyes. Somehow she found the contact very sweet, very soothing. She realized that she was tired; that the young Goth beside her seemed a tower of strength and protection. She closed her eyes with a little sigh of content. When she opened them again the motor was rolling over the pavements of Paris. They were nearing their destination.

Suddenly she gasped. Her glance had fallen upon an immense poster sign, illuminated by a row of electric bulbs. An advertisement that placarded France from end to end, as familiar as the Gold Dust Twins, or Phoebe Snow of her home advertising. It featured the lower half of a man's face, a bearded face with smiling lips that disclosed glistening and perfect teeth in a cordial smile, and beside it, in huge letters, "*Poudre Dentifrice Déjol!*"

The sight electrified Yolande. She sat up abruptly.

"Déjol!" she cried. "Look! Of course it was the poster we recognized. Oh!" The oh! was a cry of consternation. But Déjol did not so interpret it.

"Yes," he said gleefully. "As you see, one of my father's chemical discoveries. But the *Tonique Capilaire Déjol* is all my own!"

"I *told* you we both manufactured powder," Loomis hastened to say.

There was an ominous silence in the little palace on wheels.

"What is wrong? What is the matter?" Déjol inquired with naive distress as the car drew up in front of the hotel entrance. "Have I offend?"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Loomis, grasping the situation. "I guess Miss Yolande doesn't like to think of your face plastered all over Paris. It does make it sort of common, I suppose."

He produced an illuminated parchment, in the semblance of a tree

"Oh," their host beamed. "Is *that* it? Of course! I understand! You see," he added pathetically, "I have no — what you call 'women folks' in your idiom — whose feeling I must consider; but that will be all right in the morning, you shall see—*Bon soir;* and a thousand thanks for your kind company." — Benjamin Loomis turned an anxious inquiring glance on the little chaperone, clearly he was calling for help.— His despairing S. O. S. received no comforting reply — her face was enigmatic — he sighed — he had hoped — just a little hope — that Mrs. Challoner was relenting.

With Déjol he sadly went out into the night, as the ladies entered and disappeared in the elevator. In the salon of their suite the two women faced each other.

"Tooth powder!" gasped Mrs. Challoner. "Whoever would have thought! Of course, your mother, my dear, won't care for you to keep up the acquaintance."

"Hair tonic!" added Yolande in a tragic whisper. "But, oh, I do like him," she murmured under her breath.

Morning brought a huge basket of American Beauties, and noon deposited at Yolande's shrine a miniature Pomeranian puppy with a gold collar. An avalanche of flowers for Mrs. Challoner bore a note in the impressive scrawl of Benjamin Loomis:

Now, don't boggle over tooth powder; it's good powder. Let the boy have a chance. He's a good boy — and, say — I'm not bad myself — think it over.

Luncheon time and the limousine brought Déjol, *clean shaven!*

"Ha," he cried, showing all the well-known, impeccable teeth in a happy smile, "you see, now I am not known by ze powder no more. You like me so?" And they did like him. Cleancut lips and strong, well-set jaws gave him an aristocratic air that had been wanting before.

"I have been thinking," he plunged at once into the subject next his heart, "'the night,' as your saying goes, 'carries the consul.' — Is it not so? I have thought perhaps the tooth paste will trouble Mademoiselle's mother. Well, *that* will be all right — I fix. Déjol is good for dentifrice, but it is no name for Mademoiselle Yolande — Parfaitment! — and you will want ancestors. It is always so in the country democratic. That was what make Napoleon popular — he make washwomen duchesses, he make the gamin Marechals of France, all right. I have ancestors tomorrow."

In vain Mrs. Challoner summoned her dignity, in vain she strove to explain that "they really must not." Déjol was no more to be withstood than a delightful, friendly young tornado. While they declined his invitations and refused his proffered plans, he whisked them off to Chantilly, and the races; — they must, there were no "buts" about it. His horse was running, and he could have no possible chance of winning unless Mademoiselle saw him.

Forgotten was the fatal dentifrice. Who could think of such humble necessities in the face of Croesus Antinous? The big car brought them whirling to the course, through the lovely forest roads, with enchanting glimpses of the white chateau seated by its murmuring water-ways, past the hidden sorcery of that fairy place, — "La mansion de Sylvie," — on to the green sward of the Race Track, where it came to a stop in the club enclosure.

Yolande was in a daze of happiness. It seemed to her that she had always known her wonderful Goth; had been his sister in play, before he had become her lover. They talked incessantly, selfishly, personally, as lovers talk.

Mrs. Challoner, in spite of the wrath to come, was hypnotized into acquiescence. The friendly tornado had whirled her, too, off her feet. She was giddily careering through a world of luxury and laughter.

"That is my horse," Déjol exclaimed suddenly, as a big golden chestnut was led from the paddock. He is just the color of my *Capilaire* — hair returner — so I named him *Tonique*. He will win, now *you* Mademoiselle are here — you shall see. For you he will go like, what you call, the slippery lightning."

"Tonique!" The word brought the Chaperone back to earth with a jolt. But Yolande was beyond such trivialities. She would have quaffed the tonique as Olympian nectar, and puffed her face with the dentifrice. She had become as unconscious of incongruities as Déjol himself.

"Tonique," she repeated, "what a beautiful, what a wonderful creature! I love him!"

"He is yours, Mademoiselle!" he cried rapturously. "Oh, it is a pleasure to give you that which you like. And may I call you Yolande? For I cabled to your father last night, that I would beg your hand ——"

"Oh, goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Challoner, "Yolande! — what *will* your father say!"

YOLANDE paled and hesitated. Evidently she wished to say something, but could not. She turned frightened, protesting eyes on Déjol.

"Don't you think," she ventured, "you are rather — taking things for granted?"

"*Mais oui!*" he exclaimed. "Oh, *I* know. You will say 'No!' twice like that — 'NO!' 'NO!' Then I shall threaten to go away, to enlist, — to hunt lions — or something and you will call me back and say 'Yes.' But why waste all the time? I am furious with all the years I have not known you!"

Mrs. Challoner intervened. "If you please," she said icily, "until Mr. Folsome authorizes your advances, will you kindly speak of other subjects. I confess I am amazed. You are audacious, Monsieur Déjol."

He was humbled.

"A thousand pardons!" he cried. "I offend — I am sorry — I am abject. It is because I am *me*, that I am *so*. Mr. Loomis will tell you, I am not a ladies' man. I am a hard-working inventor, manufacturer. I do not take many things to heart, but when ——"

"Well," the chaperone interrupted, "you will please not take Miss Folsome to your heart until you are given permission — but what *is* all the cheering about!"

Déjol jumped. "Mon Dieu! It is the race! I had forgot. Mon Dieu! — what is that? Ah, — ah, a — ! *Tonique!* *(Continued on page 251)*